



REPORT

For the period

5th July, 1948 to 31st December, 1949

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Alderman Leonard J. Styles, J.P. (*Chairman*)

Miss A. Bloomfield, F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G.

Mr. G. M. Hickley, L.D.S., R.C.S.

Dr. W. A. Caldwell

Mr. W. Loekyer, D.L., J.P.

Mrs. D. Moir Carnegie

Lord Milne, C.A.

Dr. N. S. Craig

The Hon. Mrs. Murray (*Vice-Chairman*)

Colonel A. L. Crockford, D.S.O., O.B.E.

Miss C. C. Rae, S.R.N., S.C.M.

Mr. F. C. Culverhouse

Mr. A. G. Rawlings, M.B.E., M.A., LL.B.

Dr. W. H. S. Wallace

Secretary :

Miss Winifred M. Pemberton, F.H.A.

Finance Officer :

Mr. J. F. Blake, A.H.A.

Supplies Officer :

Mr. L. A. Sheffield, A.H.A.

Group Offices :

Renfrew Road, S.E.11 (Reliance 3821)

HOSPITALS IN THE GROUP

Lambeth Hospital, Brook Drive, Kennington, S.E.11

Medical Superintendent : Dr. P. J. Watkin, O.B.E., M.C.

Matron : Miss E. A. Osgood, S.R.N., S.C.M.

The South London Hospital for Women and Children, Clapham Common, S.W.4

Secretary : Miss W. M. Pemberton, F.H.A.

Matron : Miss S. C. Evennett, S.R.N., S.C.M.

The South Western Hospital, Landor Road, Stockwell, S.W.9

Physician Superintendent : Dr. J. C. Blake

Matron : Miss S. C. Evennett, S.R.N., S.C.M.

The Annie McCall Maternity Hospital, Jeffreys Road, S.W.4

Matron : Miss S. C. Evennett, S.R.N., S.C.M.

FIRST REPORT OF THE LAMBETH GROUP HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

This report covers the period 5th July, 1948 to 31st December, 1949.

The Group consists of four hospitals, Lambeth and South Western Hospitals, formerly municipal hospitals, and The South London Hospital for Women and The Annie McCall Maternity Hospital, formerly voluntary hospitals. The total number of beds is 1,172, and within the Group facilities exist for the treatment of all types of patients with the exception of acute mental cases.

Central Administration

The headquarters of the Group are at Lambeth Hospital where accommodation was made available for the staff of the Secretary, Finance and Supplies Officers in the former administrative block which had been out of use owing to war damage since 1941.

A certain amount of centralisation of the work of the four hospitals has been carried out. For instance, all accounts are submitted to the Finance Officer for payment and the salaries and wages of Lambeth Hospital are paid by his staff.

All purchases, with the exception of drugs and daily provisions, are made by the Supplies Officer from requisitions by the hospitals who are encouraged to state their individual requirements. Considerable economies have been effected by bulk purchasing from manufacturers of standard items such as rubber goods, surgical sundries,

bedding, etc., and in the cost of stationery by the purchase of paper in bulk which is passed to the printers as required.

Some useful co-operation has taken place between the hospitals such as the loaning of medical and surgical equipment—X-ray facilities for the Annie McCall Hospital at the South London Hospital, and the pathological work for the same hospital at Lambeth Hospital—the making of all soda water required by the Group at Lambeth Hospital—the temporary transfer of staff from one hospital to another in an emergency, and a mobile maintenance staff.

One of the chief and heaviest tasks of the Finance Officer is the preparation of estimates of expenditure which for 1949/50 were called for by the Regional Board Treasurer no less than four times during the year.

The Secretary holds monthly conferences with the Group officers and the administrative officers and eaters of the various hospitals and these frank discussions have done much to remove “teething troubles” and foster a Group spirit.

Committees

The following Sub-Committees of the Management Committee have been appointed :

- (i) Finance
- (ii) General Purposes
- (iii) Establishment
- (iv) Supplies
- (v) Catering
- (vi) Maternity

In addition, there is a Group Medical Advisory Committee and a Group Nursing Advisory Committee.

Each hospital has its own House Committee to supervise the day-to-day working of the hospital and make recommendations to the Management Committee or, to avoid delays, direct to the appropriate Sub-Committee.

These committees, regarding which there has been so much adverse criticism recently, in our opinion serve a most useful purpose—they form a vital link between the Management Committee and the individual hospitals and, in addition, relieve the Management Committee of detailed consideration of many matters.

Each House Committee has a minimum of two members of the Management Committee serving on it, one of whom acts as chairman.

Work of the Hospitals

The coming into force of the National Health Service Act threw additional work on the already heavily-taxed resources of the hospitals. With no extra beds or facilities to meet the increased demands the work has, however, proceeded smoothly which reflects great credit on the staffs concerned.

The statistics of patients treated in the Group for the year ended 31st December, 1949 are shown in an appendix, from which it will be seen that the number of in-patients increased by 6 per cent ; out-patients by 15 per cent ; and out-patient attendances by 16 per cent. as compared with the year 1948.

Lambeth Hospital

Owing to extensive war damage the number of beds in this hospital has been reduced from 1,250 to 518 beds, a totally inadequate number to meet the needs of a densely-populated working class area.

The lost beds cannot, however, be put into commission without major building work which is unfortunately out of the question at present.

In addition to the loss of beds, a block containing the kitchen, messrooms and stores was entirely demolished. The Regional Board were pressed to give the re-building of this vital unit first priority as the present kitchen situated in the basement is unhygienic and the working conditions for the staff very unsatisfactory. In addition, the messrooms distributed in various parts of the hospital are inadequate in size and most inconveniently placed. Owing to the Ministry of Health's reduction in estimates the Board were obliged to defer consideration of this major work, but a plan has been prepared and will be submitted as the Group's No. 1 priority scheme when the next programme of proposed capital works is called for by the Board.

The catering department has been re-organised—a catering officer and an assistant caterer have been appointed and a general improvement has been made in the dietary and service of meals to patients and staff.

Some minor schemes have been carried out during the period under review including the provision of an out-patient department where an appointment system has been inaugurated and is working satisfactorily; the removal of the stores from a ward unit to the ground floor of one of the bombed buildings which has been suitably adapted for

the purpose; an extension and improvement of the X-ray department and re-decoration of some of the wards and special departments.

The South London Hospital for Women and Children

This hospital was fortunate in escaping all but minor war damage and all its 210 beds are open. In addition, it has a pre-convalescent branch of 50 beds at Crawley, Sussex.

The two major problems at this hospital are (a) its long waiting list, which at 31st December numbered 1,056 ; and (b) shortage of accommodation for nursing staff.

The waiting list is due to the fact that patients come from a wide area and, although told they will have to wait many months for admission, usually elect to do so in order that they may be treated by the all-women staff of physicians and surgeons at this hospital.

The shortage of nurses' accommodation is because a new home was only partially built on the outbreak of war. Prior to the 5th July, 1948, three properties in the neighbourhood had been bought and adapted for this purpose, a fourth is now in process of conversion, and negotiations are proceeding with the Ministry of Health for the compulsory purchase of a fifth house.

The South Western Hospital

This hospital, an ex-municipal fever hospital of 427 beds, had only 130 beds open on the Appointed Day. It was, therefore, regarded by my Committee as the " king pin "

of the Group, being the only hospital at which additional beds could be opened to help to meet the urgent needs of the neighbourhood.

Plans were at once formulated for opening the empty wards and utilising the beds to the best advantage, but in September, 1948, we learned with grave concern that negotiations had been proceeding for some time between the Governors of St. Thomas' Hospital and the Regional Board for the leasing of the hospital to St. Thomas' for a period of seven years in the first instance.

Strong protest was made by us at the proposed transfer and in October last it was agreed that the hospital should remain in this Group.

Whilst awaiting this decision our plans were perforce held up and the only wards occupied were 91 beds for chronic sick, 24 beds for T.B. cases, and 22 cots for gastro-enteritis.

Since October an acute medical and surgical unit of 60 beds, medically and surgically staffed by consultants of Lambeth Hospital, has been opened. This unit will also provide the student nurses of the South London Hospital for Women with their male training and thus terminate the existing arrangements whereby the students go to five different hospitals for training in male nursing.

A further 30-bed ward for chronic sick has been provided and another ward has been opened for male T.B. cases. These cases were transferred from Lambeth Hospital and the ward thus released at Lambeth Hospital is now used for gynaecological cases.

Other wards to be opened in the near future include E.N.T. children, a second gastro-enteritis ward, adult fever wards and possibly a psychiatric unit to serve the South West Metropolitan Region.

This will bring the total bed accommodation to 359 beds, the remaining 68 beds—consisting of a cubicled isolation block—cannot be put into commission without extensive war damage repairs.

Capital works approved by the Regional Board are as follows :—

- (i) Re-wiring of the electrical system to be done in stages over a period of four years.
- (ii) Re-instatement of isolation block.
- (iii) Provision of wash-hand basins and sterilizers in ward units.
- (iv) Provision of extra bathrooms and lavatories for staff.
- (v) Provision of X-ray department.

Annie McCall Maternity Hospital

This hospital sustained severe bomb damage and repairs were in progress when we took over in July, 1948. The work was completed in September last and one floor of 15 beds opened in October—the remaining floor of 20 beds will be put into use as soon as necessary alterations to the Nurses' Home are completed.

Chronic Sick

In common with other groups, one of our biggest problems is that of the aged and chronic sick.

A geriatric medical officer has been appointed to tackle this question in the hospitals

in the Group and considerable progress has already been made in the wards of the South Western Hospital.

With the enthusiastic co-operation of the nursing staff patients who have been bed-ridden for years now get up daily and are learning to walk, and those who are well enough enjoy helping with light tasks in the wards. An occupational therapist has been engaged, and the somewhat depressing atmosphere has changed to one of cheerfulness and hope.

Some of the Group administrative and clerical staff have "adopted" the chronic wards, make regular evening visits, arrange ward entertainments and take ambulant patients to the cinema on Saturday afternoons.

A geriatric out-patient clinic has been started and the co-operation of the local doctors, district nurses and health visitors has been encouraging. Patients are visited by the medical officer after discharge and here again the health visitors have been most helpful by calling at regular intervals to see they do not become ill again through personal neglect.

All patients on the waiting list are visited by the medical officer and this ensures that the really urgent cases are admitted first and has prevented the admission of cases not in need of hospital treatment.

The problem of the old people after illness in hospital is, owing to the acute shortage of homes for the aged, a very serious one. The majority of them live alone and are not fit to return to their previous lonely existence, with the result that urgently needed beds are blocked indefinitely.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London are aware of this need and have set aside

a substantial sum for the purchase and equipment of homes for aged sick. With the approval of the Regional Board, who will be responsible for the maintenance costs, the Fund have allocated one of these homes to this Group. The home will be run by a voluntary organisation and admissions to it will be made from patients in the hospitals in the Group who, while no longer in need of active hospital treatment, are still in need of some medical supervision and nursing care.

The Work of the Almoners

In many ways the work of the almoners has changed less since the Appointed Day in the ex-municipal hospitals than in the ex-voluntary hospitals where the almoners, in addition to their social work, were also concerned with the assessment of patients' ability to contribute towards the cost of their treatment ; but in all the hospitals the work has increased.

Much of the almoners' work during the period under review has consisted of assisting patients to take advantage of what is provided under the National Health Act and the National Insurance Act of which they have little knowledge.

The shortage of convalescent homes and the Minister's decision not to take over convalescent holiday homes has created difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, particularly during the summer months when vacancies are so much in demand. The need for homes willing to take mothers with small children is very great, as is accommodation for young children when their mothers have to come into hospital.

The work in the maternity departments of both Lambeth and the South London Hospitals has considerably increased and each hospital has one almoner solely for this

work. Housing difficulties, arranging home helps, advising and helping unmarried mothers and placing unwanted babies are among the problems dealt with by the maternity almoners.

The co-operation and help of the divisional medical officers, moral welfare workers, health visitors, re-habilitation officers, the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association, the Women's Holiday Fund, Dr. Barnardo's Homes and other voluntary organisations has been greatly appreciated.

New Equipment

Lack of funds has, to a great extent, prevented the replacement of out-of-date equipment and the purchase of new and labour-saving devices, but whenever possible this has been done and amongst items provided are the following :—

Electric floor polishing machines and vacuum cleaners

Electric and gas hot closets for staff mess-rooms

Insulated tea urns in Nurses' Homes

Fish fryer at the South Western Hospital

Ice-cream conservers in all the hospitals

Gradual replacement of patients' mattresses by spring-interior ones in hospitals not already so equipped.

Staff

Sincere thanks are expressed to the medical staff for their services to the Group

and for their helpful advice on medical matters referred to them from time to time.

Our gratitude is recorded to the nursing staff for their services, with particular mention of those at the South Western Hospital where, despite the months of uncertainty as to the future of the hospital and their consequent anxiety about the future, they loyally and devotedly continued to carry out their duties.

I wish also to express our gratitude to Miss S. C. Evcnett, who for seventeen years has been Matron of the South London Hospital for Women, and who at our request has, in addition, assumed the matronships of The South Western and The Annie McCall Hospitals.

The co-operation and work of all other grades of staff in the Group has been greatly appreciated.

Voluntary Help

The Minister of Health has frequently stressed the need for continued voluntary help in the hospitals and we are indebted to those ladies who regularly give their services in the out-patient canteens, the patients' libraries and in the clerical departments.

Many friends have sent donations to our Amenities Fund for the provision of extra comforts and amenities for patients and staff, and for this practical help we are most grateful.

The Group, too, is fortunate in having the support of an active voluntary organisation, namely, The South London Hospitals (Lambeth Group) Voluntary Aid Society, which by means of members' subscriptions, bazaars, etc. raises funds for the benefit of patients and staff.

Amongst gifts received from the Society are television sets for nurses, flower vases for the wards, and Christmas trees and presents for the patients.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London have made a grant of £700 for the provision of two master wireless sets and 300 head and pillow-phones for the South Western Hospital, and one of £44 to purchase frames for pictures supplied through the British Red Cross Picture Library Scheme for the chronic and T.B. wards.

For these most generous gifts we are indeed grateful.

Grants have also been received from the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund and from the L.C.C. Sunday Cinematograph Entertainment Fund.

These sums of £280 and £580 respectively are to be used for necessitous patients and have been allocated to the Samaritan Funds of the almoners, who deeply appreciate this substantial help.

Future Plans

From the foregoing report it will be realised that only comparatively minor works and improvements have been carried out, chiefly because the Minister's drastic cuts in estimates for capital expenditure throughout the country made inevitable the postponement of all major schemes.

Much remains to be done in the hospitals in this Group, among the most urgent needs being :—

- (i) Re-instatement of kitchen, dining-rooms and stores at Lambeth Hospital (already referred to on page 6).

- (ii) Provision of heating in nurses' and domestic staff homes at the South Western Hospital, and the old Nurses' Home at Lambeth Hospital.
- (iii) Modernisation of sanitary annexes and provision of bed-pan sterilizers in the wards of the South Western Hospital.
- (iv) Installation of lifts at the South Western Hospital and renewal of certain existing ones at Lambeth Hospital.
- (v) Provision of additional accommodation for nurses and a staff canteen at the South London Hospital for Women.

Committee

In conclusion, I should like to pay a tribute to my colleagues on the Management Committee, whose loyal support and helpful advice during this difficult period I have greatly appreciated.

Leonard J. Styles,
Chairman.

STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

(Figures for 1948 shown in brackets)

In-Patients		Lambeth	South London For Women	South Western	Annie McCall Maternity *	Total
(a) Bed complement 1949 (1948)		518 (518)	260 (260)	359 (299)	35 (4)	1,172 (1,081)
(b) Average number of beds avail- 1949 able (1948)		441 (449)	242 (212)	183 (151)	13† (4)	879 (816)
(c) Average number of beds occu- 1949 pied (1948)		369 (351)	218 (185)	156 (128)	7† (3)	750 (667)
(d) Number of patients admitted 1949 (1948)		6,253 (6,012)	4,354 (4,071)	561 (438)	64 (48)	11,232 (10,569)
(e) Number of births 1949 (1948)		1,215 (1,281)	1,109 (903)	— —	53 (112)	2,377 (2,296)
(f) Average number of days resi- 1949 dent (1948)		21.5 (21)	18.2 (16.8)	116 (172)	11 (10)	— —
Out-Patients						
(a) Total number of new out- 1949 patients (1948)		20,861 (17,893)	26,758 (23,453)	4 (—)	790 (483)	48,413 (41,829)
(b) Total number of attendances 1949 (1948)		82,918 (75,082)	128,272 (107,339)	4 (—)	5,563 (4,969)	216,757 (187,390)
(c) Number of domiciliary births 1949 (1948)		— —	612 (458)	— —	— —	612 (458)

*Hospital closed for War Damage repairs 15th January, 1949—partially re-opened 26th September, 1949.

†For period 26th September to 31st December, 1949.

